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SUBJECT: REPORT TO CONGRESS ON KOREA

1. BELOW IS THE TEXT OF THE THIRD PART OF THE REPORT ON KOREA SENT TO CONGRESS UNDER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT. THE FIRST TWO PARTS ARE BASICALLY A SCALED DOWN UNCLASSIFIED VERSION OF THE MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY THE EMBASSY. A COPY OF THE FULL REPORT IS BEING POUCHED.

2. BEGIN QUOTE:

PART III: PROSPECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PHASED REDUCTIONS IN U.S. ARMED FORCES ASSIGNED TO DUTY IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

UNITED STATES FORCES ARE IN KOREA BECAUSE THEY PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN PROTECTING TWO OF OUR BASIC INTERESTS
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IN THE AREA: (1) PRESERVATION OF PEACE IN KOREA AND THE

SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, AND (2) THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA.

OUR TRADITIONAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE KOREAN PEOPLE, THE SACRIFICES OF THOSE AMERICANS WHO FOUGHT TO PRESERVE THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S INDEPENDENCE, OUR ECONOMIC TIES, AND OUR MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY OBLIGATIONS GIVE US AN IMPORTANT STAKE IN THE INDEPENDENCE AND WELL-BEING OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE NEED TO MAINTAIN STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA WHERE THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THE SOVIET UNION, AND OUR CLOSE ALLY, JAPAN, CONVERGE IS EQUALLY COMPELLING.

THE THREAT WHICH NORTH KOREA POSES IS EVIDENT. ONE OF THE MOST REGIMENTED SOCIETIES IN THE WORLD DURING THE 23 YEARS SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE MILITARY ARMISTICE, NORTH KOREA HAS REMAINED INTENT ON UNIFYING THE PENINSULA ON ITS OWN TERMS. WHILE ITS STRATEGY HAS UNDERGONE PERMUTATIONS FROM TIME TO TIME THERE ARE NO SIGNS THAT IT HAS RULED OUT FORCE AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING ITS OVER-RIDING OBJECTIVE. PYONGYANG MAINTAINS A MILITARY EDGE OVER THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, AND ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS MILITARY CAPABILITIES HAVE NOT SLACKENED. AT THE SAME TIME, NORTH KOREAN PROCLIVITIES FOR RASH ACTIONS HAVE BEEN DEMONSTRATED BY SUCH ACTS AS THE SEIZING OF THE PUEBLO, THE RAID ON THE SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE, THE SHOOTING DOWN OF THE EC-121, THE TUNNELING OPERATIONS UNDER THE DMZ, AND MOST RECENTLY, THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT WHICH RESULTED IN THE BRUTAL MURDER OF TWO AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS.

TO COUNTER THIS THREAT TO SOUTH KOREA AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA, THE U.S. HAS PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN THE SECURITY EFFORTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE PRECEDING SECTIONS OF THIS REPORT DESCRIBE THIS PARTICIPATION IN DETAIL, INCLUDING THE PREMISES UNDERLYING OUR CONTINUED DEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES IN SOUTH KOREA. THESE SECTIONS DEMONSTRATE BOTH THE VALUE OF THE U.S. PRESENCE AS A DETERRENT AND THE FACT THAT OUR CONTRIBUTION HAS BEEN REDUCED AS THE ROK HAS ACQUIRED A GROWING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAPACITY TO MEET ITS DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS FROM ITS OWN

RESOURCES. OVER THE YEARS OUR TROOP STRENGTH HAS DECLINED FROM A POST-KOREA WAR HIGH OF 86,000 IN 1955 TO THE CURRENT LEVEL OF ABOUT 42,000. WE WITHDREW A DIVISION OF 20,000 MEN IN 1971-72. THE LEVEL SINCE THAT TIME HAS NOT CHANGED SUBSTANTIALLY BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME ADJUSTMENTS. AT PRESENT, FOR EXAMPLE, WE ARE

PHASING OUT OUR NIKE-HERCULES AIR DEFENSE UNITS, AND OTHER ADJUSTMENTS IN OUR MILITARY FUNCTIONS ARE BEING INTRODUCED.

AS WE HAVE MADE CLEAR ON OTHER OCCASIONS, THE LEVEL OF OUR FORCES IN KOREA IS NOT IMMUTABLE. THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER REDUCTIONS REMAINS UNDER REVIEW. THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCH REDUCTIONS, HOWEVER, DEPEND ON A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS AND INVOLVE ASSESSMENTS WHICH MUST BE MADE WITH GREAT CARE. A PRIMARY CONSIDERATION IS THE THREAT FROM THE NORTH, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH OUR PRESENCE HELPS CONTAIN THAT THREAT. AS NOTED ABOVE, NORTH KOREA'S MILITARY ADVANTAGES OVER THE SOUTH, THE ACTIONS OF THE KIM IL SUNG REGIME AND OUR ASSESSMENT OF ITS INTENTIONS INDICATE THAT THE THREAT OF AN AGGRESSIVE STRIKE BY PYONGYANG IS A REAL ONE. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES IN KOREA HAS PLAYED A KEY PART IN DETERRING THE NORTH FROM TAKING SUCH A STEP AND HAS, OVER THE YEARS, KEPT THE TENSE SECURITY SITUATION ON THE PENINSULA ESSENTIALLY STABLE.

IN THIS REGARD WE MUST ALSO CONSIDER HOW FORCE REDUCTIONS WOULD BE VIEWED IN PYONGYANG AND ELSEWHERE. ANY FUTURE ADJUSTMENTS IN OUR FORCE LEVELS MUST BE PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT SO THAT THEY DO NOT INVITE NEW AGGRESSIVE AND DESTABILIZING MOVES BY PYONGYANG.

ANOTHER FACTOR DETERMINING OUR SPECIFIC TROOP LEVELS IS THE ABILITY OF ROK FORCES TO COPE ON ITS OWN WITH ANY THREAT FROM THE NORTH. SOUTH KOREA CLEARLY HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN IMPROVING ITS MILITARY CAPABILITIES. THE NORTH, HOWEVER, WITH THE SUPPORT OF ITS ALLIES, IS CONTINUING ITS OWN BUILDUP. JUDGMENTS AS TO THE RELATIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRENGTHS OF BOTH SIDES AND THE RESULTING PROSPECTS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ELEMENTS OF OUR OWN FORCES INEVITABLY ENTAIL AN IRREDUCIBLE ELEMENT OF CONJECTURE. PYONGYANG'S OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE MILITARY BALANCE AND THE IMPLICATIONS THEY DERIVE FOR THEIR OWN STRATEGY WILL BE CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR DETERRENT EFFORTS. AND WE HAVE NO SURE-FIRE METHOD OF EVALUATING THEIR PERSPECTIVES WITH CONFIDENCE GIVEN THE IMPENETRABLE WALL OF SECRECY THAT SURROUNDS THEIR DECISION-MAKING.

A THIRD FACTOR IN DETERMINING THE PROSPECTS FOR FORCE REDUCTIONS IS THE PREVAILING SITUATION IN NORTHEAST ASIA AND THE ATTITUDES OF THE OTHER POWERS IN THE AREA. OUR DECISIONS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE POSSIBLE REACTIONS OF JAPAN, THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

CHINA AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT FUTURE REDUCTIONS
MAY IMPLY REGARDING OUR ROLE IN KOREA AND THROUGHOUT
ASIA.

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FAVORS OUR CONTINUED PRESENCE
IN SOUTH KOREA, REGARDING IT AS A MAJOR FACTOR CONTRIBUT-
ING TO STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA. AN EARLY SIGNIFICANT
REDUCTION OF U.S. FORCES IN KOREA WOULD RAISE APPREHEN-
SION IN JAPAN ABOUT JAPAN'S SECURITY AND THE CREDIBILITY
OF THE US-JAPAN MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY. IT IS ALSO
NOTEWORTHY THAT ALTHOUGH MOSCOW AND PEKING PROVIDE SUP-
PORT TO NORTH KOREA, THEY EVIDENTLY GIVE NO ENCOURAGEMENT
TO PYONGYANG TO TAKE ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT UPSET THE PRESENT
SITUATION, AND MAY VIEW OUR TROOP PRESENCE AS A STABILIZ-
ING ELEMENT ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

IT HAS BEEN OUR HOPE THAT THE INTEREST IN STABILITY
EVIDENCED SO FAR BY THE GREAT POWERS IN THE AREA WILL
PAVE THE WAY FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION OF THE KOREAN
PROBLEM. WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED A MEANINGFUL
RENEWAL OF THE SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE, A PROPOSAL WHICH
THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAS REPEATEDLY MADE TO THE NORTH.
WE HAVE ALSO PROPOSED THAT SOUTH AND NORTH, JOINED BY
THE U.S. AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, DISCUSS
WAYS TO REDUCE TENSIONS ON THE PENINSULA. THUS FAR
THERE HAS BEEN NO POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE OTHER SIDE
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ON EITHER OF THESE PROPOSALS. WE ARE NEVERTHELESS
CONTINUING TO SEEK WAYS IN WHICH THE NORTH AND SOUTH CAN
REACH AGREEMENTS WHICH WILL GUARANTEE SECURITY AND
STABILITY IN THE AREA.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE WILL MAINTAIN OUR SUPPORT FOR THE
DEFENSE CAPABILITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AS IT
MOVES TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN THIS FIELD. AT THE
SAME TIME WE WILL CONTINUE TO REVIEW ALL THE ASPECTS
OF THIS SUPPORT, STRIVING TO ACHIEVE THE MOST EFFECTIVE
AND LEAST COSTLY MIX OF ELEMENTS. IN THIS CONTEXT,
WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXAMINE OUR FORCE PRESENCE WITH
A VIEW TOWARD FURTHER ADJUSTMENTS AS THESE BECOME
APPROPRIATE.

END QUOTE
ROBINSON

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